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ABSTRACT

This book, written in a narrative style that combines autobiography, case studies, and fiction, presents a picture of academic life as experienced by gay men and lesbian women. The way in which research has defined gay identity is the way lesbian and gay people are identified in the daily life of the university, and it looks to the university faculty as an intellectual vanguard to advance the understanding of sexual orientation and its relation to societal norms. The book is organized in two parts; the first deals with the relationship between cultural studies and "queer" theory, and expands on the notion of culture, the structural and disciplinary implications for academe, how norms get defined, and the distinction between difference and oppression. Part 2 considers the consequences of queer theory upon academic life. It offers an overview of gay identity in college and university life, quotes from interviews with gay academics, includes a discussion of how language is used to hide and frame gay and lesbian issues, and covers issues such as domestic partner benefits and sexual orientation classes. A final chapter calls for the acceptance of sexual identity and offers strategies for the necessary institutional change. (Contains 100 references.) (CH)

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